773 protection. The Peulh would acquire more cattle by taking charge of the animals belonging to the Mossi, and the Yarga would find better markets for his salt and kola nuts. As for the blacksmith, he would make the many farm implements needed for the cultivation of the vast domains which were either not worked at all or insufficiently exploited because of the lack of tools.

They set the date for their return. Once more the naba received them very cordially, but they showed no greater deference to him than they had shown on their first visit.

And so the legend comes to an end by concluding that this is why the Peulh and the Yarga have retained their spirit of independence. As for the blacksmith, who remained poorer, he came [526] to submit to certain regulations which are common to all the Mossi although he never leaves his forge to salute the naba when he passes. As has already been noted, he merely strikes his zanré against his anvil, just as formerly he struck it on the ground by way of salutation.

[124] Chapter 8

Customs. Enthronement of the Naba. Names.

Death of a Mogho Naba

643 The death of a Mogho Naba is kept secret until the arrival at ●766 Ouagadougou of the Tansoba, who was forewarned when the illness became grave. On his arrival, the public is told that "the fire has gone out" (bougsaré kimé).

The personages in charge of the burial are Pazany'ting'soba (the undertaker), Tampouy Naba, Kassiri Naba, Benghin Naba, Toghin Naba, Ganin Naba, and Tanghin Naba.

The arrangement of the tomb. The grave in which the mortal remains of the king are buried is really a subterranean hut. Before the king is placed in his final dwelling (1), the following things

1. The body is wrapped in one or several cow hides.

643 are placed in the tomb: two sheep skins (gando); some cushions
766 (nagpouya); several bolsters (fourkamsé); and a zoukougré -- all made of leather. All of these are arranged as though the chief were to lie down to rest.

After the corpse has been washed (Naba Siguire, father of the present Mogho Naba, was washed by marabouts [125] since he was the son of a naba who was a Moslem believer), it is clothed all in white. In the house of every Mogho Naba a corner of the wall is
[531 decorated with rather attractive designs, and the dead Mogho Naba
761] is carried through it on his way to the tomb. The sight of this corner, which is seldom visited, reminds the chief still living of the mortality of all beings and makes him realize that in the same way as he succeeded someone, so will he, in turn, be replaced by another; the corner will one day become an opening through which his own body will pass at the end of his lifetime.

In addition to the garments in which he is clothed, the following items are placed in the grave beside him: a folded white robe (fou yorgo); a pair of trousers (kourga); a blanket (fou gobga); a pair of slippers (néoda); a small knife (souga); a sword (zangoégo); a gourd of beer (dam) with a calabash over the neck and a small cloth (leppré) over it; a loaf of salt (yamsem); a gourd filled with a hundred kola nuts (gouré wamdé); a sewn sack filled with cowries (liguide ne yolmoumdi); napaga ornaments (douamba and zuyan); and tobacco if the chief smoked or chewed it.

[767] The undertaker is entitled to take the salt, some kola nuts, and some meat when he departs.

[126] When the burial is over, one walks around the house of the deceased.

643 It should be noted that before the burial or sometimes when the death of the king is first known, all of his wives who have children take flight for fear that their son will be made kourita.

The kourita is a child of the deceased and must bear the latter's name. He is exiled and must never, so long as he lives, look upon the new Mogho Naba. Until the emperor is represented on earth by his kourita, his successor cannot be named. This explains the general flight of all of the wives who have children.

The Kombéré: Death, Enthronement

631 763 202 Death. Upon the death of a kombéré two representatives in mourning are sent from the canton to Ouagadougou to deliver the sad news to the Mogho Naba. The envoys are entrusted with a horse or a sheep, depending on the importance of the naba. Tanga branches are tied to the animal's tail (see Ouidi Naba, Chapter 4).

[136] When the first emissary reaches the courtyard of the Mogho Naba, he sits down, taking care to place one hand on the ground and stretching out his arm. Since the very sight of the horse is significant, even before any explanation is offered, the Zusoaba enters the house of the Mogho Naba and comes out again bearing a gourd of water with flour in it (zom kom) which he pours on the envoy's arm.

The horse is then handed over to a representative of the Ouidi Naba who removes the branches and leads the animal to Widhin [Ouidin].

The Zusoaba takes back the gourd, and it is only then that the Ouidi Naba says to the Mogho Naba: "Naba zagl yka sambga le tongalamé (Chief So-and-So has been stricken with such-and-such an illness and has succumbed)." It should be added that before going to see the Mogho Naba, the envoys first inform the ministers of the death of the kombéré.

631 766 The Mogho Naba asks a few appropriate questions and sends the representatives to prepare the kouré. On the day of the ceremony, the Nabitienga (eldest son of the deceased chief) has large quantities of beer and saghbo prepared and sheep and cattle killed to feed the people gathered in great numbers for the occasion.

The house is circled, as was described for the Mogho Naba.

[415] (a) Koupéogo (kouré basket). The koupéogo is a basket, artistically made, into which is put the foutou (clothing of the deceased), [137] koursi (trousers), his pougla (red fez), his néoda (slippers), the zandé (club), and the wed'zouré (horse's tail). This basket is laid upon a pé'gaongo (skin of a sheep) in the zaongo (antechamber).

One of the sisters of the Nabitienga, usually the eldest daughter of the deceased, carries the péogo outside and seats herself at the place where the dead chief held his daily audiences (guéré). The benda, liunsé, and gangando drums are played together, and then

631 everyone gives what he can. Everyone from the Nabitienga down
●766 through his brothers and sisters, close relatives, and their brothers and sisters, in short, anyone even remotely related to the deceased, comes up and offers something. Most often the gift is made up of cowries.

The koupéogo is then returned to the zaongo. Some zom kom (water with flour in it) and some dam (dolo or fermented millet beer) are poured at the door of the antechamber.

The benda and other drummers gather up all the cowries they have received and go a short distance from the house to divide them up.

The benda are expected to give a few cowries to any Yarga, Silmimoaga, or sayan (1) who happens to pass by during the dis-

> 1. Yarga: a Dioula [Diula] of the Mandé [Mande] group. Silmimoaga: one who has adopted the customs of the Peulh.

tribution.

Sayan: blacksmith.

643 428 (b) Fado. This is the share that goes by right to the Mogho Naba from the estate of every kombéré.

[138] The Mogho Naba sends representatives to whom are entrusted a rooster, a sheep, and, depending on the importance of the chief, a cow and 5,000 to 10,000 cowries.

As soon as he has been presented to the Nabitienga, the first envoy of the Mogho Naba says to him: "Nab'kayé ti mog'naba yel tid wa pous' nabitiengh'togo lad reguib' lokon'wa tib laguemb taba ti ya yel koudgo (Such-and-such a chief having died, the Mogho Naba sends us to deliver his condolences to the Nabitienga and to request of him that the quiver of the naba be turned over to us so that it may be placed beside those of his ancestors, as is the custom)."

The Nabitienga thanks them and orders the loko [quiver] to be brought out at once. It is placed on the ground, and sacrifice is made, in turn, of the chicken, the sheep, and even the cow sent by the Mogho Naba.

631 643 428 766 All of these preliminaries are only the beginning, and when they are completed, the emperor's first envoy orders the Nabitienga to go out into the sunshine so that the fado [share for the Mogho Naba] may be claimed. The Nabitienga complies with the request. Thereupon the first envoy says to him through a messenger: "Mogh' Naba yé tid wa reg fado, ya nig'tousri (1,000 head of cattle), pissi tousri (1,000 sheep), bouss'tousri (1,000 goats), foutou tousri (1,000 garments)," etc. To which the Nabitienga replies: "Tond ba sin ki a ka bas roumsi ne arzek'yé (our late father left neither animals nor other wealth sufficient to satisfy the demands of the Mogho Naba)."

The messenger reports the reply to the emperor's representatives. The relatives of the Nabitienga go [139] to gather together a wanka (hoe), a laré (ax), and a goégo (sickle), and then they tell the nayiridamba (representatives) to go into the antechamber where all of the wealth is piled up. The nayirdamba [sic] send in some soroné who come back and report on what is there. Then they ask the Nabitienga for the fado a second time, and this time it is given to them in the form of the following articles: a robe, a pair of trousers, bracelets, fodo, rouamba (ornaments of the napagha), an ample robe, a pair of slippers, a knife (zangoégo), some salt, some cowries, kalgo (soumbala) balls, nemdo (dried meat), moui (rice), etc.

The envoys are housed for a whole week by the Nabitienga, aided by the inhabitants and his relatives.

On the eighth day, before taking leave of his guests, the Nabitienga slaughters a cow, has large quantities of saghbo and beer prepared and sheep killed, gives clothing to all the envoys of the Mogho Naba, offers them up to 50,000 cowries, depending on their importance, etc.

He has a horse saddled with his father's saddle, and the animal is tethered in front of the antechamber.

One of the nayirdamba unties the horse and walks three times around the house of the deceased naba. The person who mounts the horse is given liguidi (cowries) and clothing and the fez of the naba. He is entitled to keep all this after his return to Ouagadougou, after he has reported to the authorities. The horse becomes the property of the Mogho Naba and is turned over to the Wedranga Naba (personal equerry of the king).

631 duty of these representatives to assemble the notables of the villages and to order them to submit to the new naba, the only one recognized by the Mogho Naba.

631 In order to show their joy,[1] the people have large quantities of
527 beer prepared, and games are organized which may continue for several days. The village notables come to offer their submission and to swear fealty, bringing gifts (cowries, sheep, etc.) in accordance with the resources of the village and the wealth of the inhabitants.

631 When the nayirdamba leave for Ougadougou, the naba gives:
431 a wife and a robe to the Bilbalga; a wife and a robe to the soroné of the Mogho Naba; a wife and a robe to the soroné or the Baloum-Naba; a wife and a robe to the child of the Bend'Naba; etc.

Any children born to the women [145] so given belong, respectively, to the masters of these representatives.

631 Burial. Their burial is carried out in much the same manner
●766 as in the case of the Mogho Naba, except for the specific persons involved. The arrangement of the tomb is also similar, although there is, of course, less pomp displayed. [146]

[1] [i.e. At the appointment of the new naba—Analyst]

Chapter 9

The Two Major Mossi Festivals

Mossi Festivals

796 In actual fact, there is only one annual festival celebrated by
527 the Mossi. It is known as tinsé or tingana. A second festival, which is more a family affair, is called basgha. The latter is variously named, depending on the region: for the Mogho Naba, it is called m'barengma; for the ordinary Moaga, basgha; in certain regions, kinkirga; etc. Although the date for the first festival is fixed by the Mogho Naba, the second festival is celebrated by each canton chief, each village chief, or each ikanda (married man) on any day that suits him, usually after the harvest.

In addition to these principal festivals, every important village has its annual festival, a kind of special market day. On

755 must be procured. The leaf used to cover a wound must be held by means of a thin cotton cord with cowries attached at the end, three cowries for a boy, four for a girl. A hemp cord with three or four knots, worn around the neck, wrist, or any other part of the body, prevents swelling of that part and is also a master remedy against hair worms. Sometimes it is not so easy to secure the prescribed amulet, for instance, if it is the beak or claw of a hawk, a deer horn, or certain parts of a buffalo or koba. The poor Mossi goes to great pains to find this indispensable amulet.

763 Do as he may, sooner or later he must die. When an old man feels that his end is near, he calls his family and gives them his last instructions. He talks to his eldest son and tells him where his cattle and caches are to be found, who are his debtors and creditors. Sometimes death comes swiftly without warning, and the old man has no time to talk to his heir; a large part of the fortune is thus lost, because a Mossi in good health never tells anybody, especially not his /68/ children, where his property is, and those to whom he has entrusted it do not return it. Some Peul have made rather nice profits in this fashion.

761 The death of a young man or woman or more especially that of a small child is usually ascribed to an old woman who is said to have 754 eaten the child's soul, and some old women claim to have this secret. [683] The sorcerer points out the guilty woman who is seized and put to death. Every sudden or accidental death is ascribed to an evil spirit, and the funeral ceremonies reflect this.

762 Suicide is extremely rare, but it does occur. Here is one case where we knew the participants. A man quarreled with his wife. The wife, who was stronger than her husband, overwhelmed him in the fight, and the neighbors openly ridiculed him. The following day the husband was found hanging in his hut. A pit was hastily dug [766] in his nearest field, and he was tossed into it naked without further ceremony. Suicide is regarded as a criminal act, and even the corpse is punished for it.

763 Like all human beings, the Mossi fear death. No longer to eat millet mush or to drink dolo seems to them the greatest of misfortunes. Still, when a Mossi sees death approaching, he resigns himself to it and accepts it stoically. He rests his head on the lap of his first wife, and his other wives gather around him. His friends and the village elders sit before the soukala, and all wait silently for hours until the

766 The death of a naba, as we mentioned earlier, is carefully con-
579 cealed; the more powerful he was, the more careful the concealment. This is done out of fear of the disturbances which would be created by those who aspire to his succession, or by scoundrels who might take advantage of the absence of authority to indulge in every kind of robbery. At the death of the Moro Naba his province was sacked by armed bands, and no one dared to go out unarmed. On the day following the death of Moro Naba Sigri, we had to fetch millet from a village located a few kilometers from Ouagadougou. All the bearers were armed with bows, arrows, and spears. They made an interesting picture in the moonlight.

766 In spite of all their amulets and all their sacrifices, nabas die just like their subjects, and when this happens, his relatives hastily dig a pit in the entrance hut of the soukala and lay the corpse there without any ceremonies. Those wishing to see the naba will be told that he is unwell. The naba of Koupéla is especially favored in this respect. One of the huts in his soukala, standing near the entrance, is set aside for his burial. A pit has been dug within the hut, and every /72/ day the caretaker comes to pour dolo into the hole. This caretaker must not have a wife, and if he happens to have one before his appointment to this post, the naba takes her for himself. On the other hand, the caretaker eats the same food as the naba and drinks the same millet beer. Needless to say, this job is not in great demand. The
[761] naba may not enter the hut, and when the roof is in need of repair, the drummers are sent for, and the naba must flee; woe to him if he should hear the sound of the drums, for he would die within the year. When the naba of Koupéla dies, his hands and feet are immediately pierced with big thorns so that he may not return; should he venture to seize one of his people after his death, the thorns would cause him such pain that he would immediately let go of his prey. The corpse is tossed into the pit to fall as it may. The Mossi, full of respect for their chiefs when they are alive, make up for it when they are dead.

Young unmarried men or girls are buried with a previously deceased old woman of the family, so that someone will take care of them in the other life. Their death is regarded as a true misfortune and mourned accordingly. There are no dances or ceremonies. The father, mother, and younger siblings shave their heads on the second or third day after the burial.

[775] A small child is buried by the path. He will soon return in the person of the first child borne by his mother after his death.

766 [761] [262] Suicides are buried like our dogs; here, all dogs are eaten. Lepers are buried at night without festivities. Accidental death, whether from a fall, snake bite, or any other cause, is attributed to an evil spirit who must not be irked by granting funerary honors to its victim, or else it would return and kill another member of the family. This is why those who die of an accident are buried without ceremonies and without undertakers. Their heads are not shaved, because God has called them with their hair on, as the Mossi say. A pit is dug, they 769 are buried, and that is all. They have no one to represent them; to the anniversary of their death, the koure, they have no kourita.

Every Mossi who dies of illness, be it man, woman, child, or naba, survives in the person of the kourita. In the case of a married man, the kourita or koutoarsa (who imitates the deceased) is a woman of the dead person's family, usually one of the wives of one of his younger brothers, someone who bears a certain resemblance to the deceased. She is chosen by the family, and sometimes designated by the dying person. She wears the clothes of the deceased, his shirt, his blanket, his hat, his shoes, his bracelets, and his rings; she wears his belt and knives, walks with his staff, his hoe, his doré, and bears his spear, blade pointing toward the ground. She walks like the person she represents. She must imitate him in every way and keep his presence alive in the household. If the deceased was usually accompanied by a /73/ child bearing his satchel, the kourita is followed by the same child bearing the same satchel, but turned inside out. If the deceased was a leper and had no fingers, she pretends not to have any; if he liked to laugh, she laughs; if he was peevish and quarreled with everyone, she maintains a constant state of anger. The children of the deceased call her their father; the wives call her their husband and prepare her millet mush. If the dead man was a naba, she is called naba; if he was not, she is called by the name of the deceased.

769 428 She acts in this manner until the day of koure. On that day she shaves her head like the other members of the family, and her role ends there. She retains the name kourita, however, and on the day when the inheritance is distributed, she receives a garment in exchange for the clothes of the deceased. If the heir is generous, if the inheritance allows it, she is given some livestock, sometimes a child. It is said that the kourita dies sooner than if she had not played this role, because the ancestral spirits will come and fetch her. For this reason, the position is not in great demand.

769 On Monday millet beer is prepared for Wednesday, and the dances and games continue, as they do on Tuesday. On this day all the wives of the dead man vanish, because they must not witness the ceremony of pounding the grave that will take place on the following day.

/75/ On Wednesday morning the whole family goes to the grave
769 with paddles, accompanied by drummers and the undertaker. The
767 women have brought water, and everyone pounds the earth over the grave, on top of which an earthen pot is left in the case of a woman, a stone in the case of a man. When the grave has been thoroughly pounded, the undertaker kills a chicken on the stone or pot and says: "Take the chicken from the grave, eat it with your family, and leave your children in peace." Then he takes a gourd of beer and pours it over the grave. The chicken is roasted and eaten, and the jar of beer is drunk on the spot. Everyone returns to the house of the deceased, and the games and dances are taken up with renewed vigor.

769 On Thursday the whole family goes to market and thanks the friends who have assisted at the festivities and who have helped them.

The funeral ceremonies are now over, and there will be no further ado about the deceased except once a year on the Day of the Dead.

Young men or girls who die childless also have a koure, usually on the same day as an old man or woman who died previously. If no one in the family has recently died, the children's koure is carried out without ceremonies. The father, mother, and younger siblings shave and build a small hut which represents the hut of the deceased, and this is where the chickens or sometimes a goat are offered to him. Millet beer, of course, is distributed to the relatives and friends who are present, but there is no dancing and no pounding of the grave.

766 Ostensibly the death of a naba is not known, and the poor man is buried without ceremony. When his heirs have gathered all that is needed to give their father a funeral worthy of him, they have the news of his death spread everywhere on a Saturday morning. A dummy built with the dead man's clothes is laid in the hut of his first wife or in his own hut, and all the ceremonies are carried out Saturday night as they would be for any other important burial. The dummy is carried like a corpse; the soil covering the pit is disturbed slightly, and the clothes are buried there. On the following day, Sunday, all
769 the koure ceremonies are held, and their solemnity is proportional to the naba's power.

Thus everyone has his koure, with the exception of nursing children, who will soon return, and of suicides.

776 tangandé in every detail either, for only the village may have a tangandé, and there does not seem to be any magic pact unless the sacrifices offered are considered as such a pact, which does not seem justified. The tangandé-animal is never sacrificed, and no special initiation takes place.

774 761 [775] The closest thing to totemism among the Mossi seems to be their concept of the human soul, and yet it is not, properly speaking, a totem in the sense indicated by these authors. Every man has a soul that lives on after death and takes the name of kyma, while during life it is called siga. Shortly before death it takes the name of toullé [197] /85/ in Ouagadougou or toundo in Koupela, but siga, toundo, kyma are one and the same thing, one and the same principle. According to the Mossi, this soul is an animal, invisible of course, a snake, a crocodile, a deer, a hare. The soul is related to this animal, it belongs to the same family, so that to kill a snake or a crocodile in a village where the soul of the inhabitants is a snake or a crocodile is to kill an inhabitant of the village; every individual related to the snake has a snake in the village to represent thim, and he will die when his soul-animal dies.

774 784 Yet, and this runs counter to the definitions of totemism, the individual expects no aid from this animal, never sacrifices to it, and never kills it himself to renew the kinship pact. A person whose soul is a crocodile is forbidden to kill crocodiles in his own village, but he may kill them elsewhere, although he may never eat them, while he may kill the tangandé animal as long as he does so outside the tangandé, and he may eat it at any time. Some people, when they [746] find a dead soul-animal of their family near their village, render it funeral honors, weep, wail, and bury it as one of their own, but they offer it no gifts and hold no kouré. Generally it is merely covered with earth. The most widespread soul-animals are a kind of snake [50] (bosombodro) and the crocodile. Several families may have the same one, and marriage, although exogamic, is not forbidden between members of these families.

774 754 The soul may leave the body and in fact leaves it often, especially during the night. If children had a good time in a certain place, if they enjoyed themselves at someone's house, the soul returns there at night. This is when the worst is to be feared from the sorcerers; they may seize the soul by surprise, and its unfortunate owner will die.

775 ground; he also pours what is left at the bottom of the gourd, so the
769 souls will rejoice with him. It is considered a great honor when a
[554] naba tells an elder to grasp one side of the gourd and to pour along with him.

775 One must not laugh about the souls of the deceased and their visits
761 to earth. If you doubt their return, listen to what an old naba once told me. "One day, I had gone to visit a naba, my friend and neighbor. We had arranged to meet at his house with another neighboring chief. He gave us a very nice welcome, and the day was most pleasant. We were resting at night in the shelter of his soukala when we were suddenly awakened by the sound of harness bells and horses galloping. On the following day we left our host. No sooner had we left than he took ill. A week later he died. The souls had come to fetch him. Oh! Father, do not laugh about the souls of the deceased!" And the good old man trembled with emotion. This is what our Mossi believe. They firmly believe in all these ghost stories.

775 Are the souls reincarnated? Small children who die before the age of reason are said to return in the person of the first child borne by their mother. This is why, especially if the mother has lost several
[304] children in a row, the baby is marked at birth with distinctive signs, particularly tattooings on the belly and lower back; sometimes, if he
[766] dies, a piece of his ear is cut off, or a toe or finger joint broken. It is said that the child born next will bear the same marks, but no living example of this could be cited. Often, the mother leaves the hut where her baby died. An old woman spreads ashes before the door in the evening, and if small footprints are found in the morning, it is a sign that the child came back and wishes to return to his mother's bosom.

Rebirth is not granted to anyone other than young children, not even to young unmarried people. They remain in the place of the souls for years on end, the number of which cannot be ascertained, and no distinction is made between the rich and the poor, the powerful and their subjects.

775 The soul of suicides, cursed in death, is not entitled as a rule to
762 funeral ceremonies. It wanders through the world without harming anyone, but unable to find rest.

577 Morality is reduced to its simplest expression. Whatever harms
673 other people is bad. Think your own intimate thoughts and desire anything you like; as long as you do no harm to your fellow man, no fault has been committed. Fornication and adultery are faults only

664 554 "The wives of the Moro Haba never give birth or raise their children at his own place of residence, but only in one of the eunuch villages. In theory they do not stand above the wives of common natives, but in practice they enjoy high consideration among the Mossi, like all that is connected with the Moro Naba.

"The sons of the sovereign, once weaned, are entrusted to a province or canton chief who is put in charge of their education. [582] At the age of ten they are married and settled in a village, where they live, surrounded by a court, but without necessarily being given a territorial command.

"The prerogatives attached to the title of Moro Naba's son are vast as long as the monarch is alive. They grant the right to steal, to loot, and even to kill with impunity.

"Upon the death of the Moro Naba, his sons become mere nakomsé (sons of chiefs) whose position nevertheless remains quite privileged.

643 644 554 "One of the sons of the deceased sovereign, however, is granted special privileges. At the death of the Moro Naba, the latter's wives elect one of his young sons who adopts his name and, so to speak, perpetuates him. He has no /territorial/ command, but he is surrounded by a court similar to that of the Moro Naba, he enjoys respect almost equal to that paid to the latter, and he is a sacred figure. No one has the right to contradict him or to harm him.

644 534 "As for the Moro Naba's daughters, although in principle they do not stand above ordinary Mossi girls, in practice they are treated with the strictest respect by all natives. Once married, they have almost complete freedom of action vis-à-vis their husband, and they often take advantage of this to lead a most unruly existence.

643 766 "When the Moro Naba's death has been verified, his burial is carried out and followed by the funeral ceremonies, which are held in the same fashion as for a common native, with the sole difference /574/ that they have more brilliance and that the sacrifices are more sizable.

642 672 "For the whole duration of the interregnum, the land falls into a state of complete anarchy. Everyone has the right to kill, loot, and steal as he pleases. Convicts who are serving sentence are fully pardoned and set free.

764 down on the chest of the deceased. Then they spread out on the boards a layer of clay, and add earth until the hole is filled. A small canari is placed on the grave to mark its location.

Other members of the soukala are buried around it in the maize field. A canari is also placed upon the grave. The same applies to slaves. Only people stricken with sleeping sickness are buried [766] in the bush, to prevent the spread of the disease.

The deceased is buried on the morning following the day of his death. The heir of the deceased soukala chief and the family elders kill chickens upon the grave. They take the animals by the legs and crush their skull on the floor of the grave. This is the liturgical procedure for such killings. Nine chickens are thus killed [536] in succession and set aside to be eaten. If the soukala is wealthy, sheep are killed instead of chickens. They are seized by their hind legs and their head is struck three times on the floor of the grave, then their throat is cut with a knife. The souls of all those animals go to the deceased.

On the night following the burial, people people play drums, shriek, dance, shoot guns. When day breaks everyone returns home to wash, rest, and eat. Then they return when the sun sets, and this goes on for three successive nights.

765 When the ceremony is over, the date of a new reunion is set for 30, 40, 60 days or even a year later. This second ceremony is often made to coincide with the time of the millet harvest. The children of the deceased have their heads shaved. Much to is prepared. The sisters and daughters who have married away come on the date set, bringing sheep and dolo. The family and the whole village come to greet the successor of the deceased soukala head, to drink and to eat. The griot and large drums are sent for. People make music, dance, sing, and drink for two days, and /587/ this time there is no weeping. This second reunion ends the funeral ceremonies occasioned by someone's death.

769 The Mossi have a yearly feast for their dead and their ancestors. It is the Tiougou or Bassara, which is also called Péléga in other areas. This feast is celebrated in December, when all the millet has been harvested and the cold weather has come. The family and soukala heads have much dolo prepared and pour it onto the graves

793 643 839 778 the sacrifice and killed the donkey. He also slit the throat of a horse, a beef, and a sheep. (This eunuch in charge of guarding the tomb was called by the name of Naba Koutou, and in a way perpetuated the deceased Moro Naba. He was granted special privileges. If a man who was condemned to death ran away and reached the tomb, he was safe but became the eunuch's slave. Similarly, [567] a captive who ran away from his master gained his freedom from the latter if he reached the grave, but became the slave of Naba Koutou. Finally, at that time, it was forbidden to ride by the hut on a donkey. Naba Koutou would seize the donkey, or at least demand a ransom in cowries before returning it. This applied to any animals who ran astray near the tomb. The tomb still exists nowadays, along with the Naba Koutou who watches over it, but the latter no longer enjoys the same privileges.)

793 645 We saw earlier that the Moro Naba had a sort of minister of the cult in the person of the Gandé Naba, high priest and sacrificer. There was also the Pouy Naba, or chief of the fetisheers, whose function was probably to mediate between the Mossi bara and timisoba as a whole and the central authorities.

782 Let us close this study of Mossi religion, which incidentally is quite incomplete and a mere outline, with a few words on the human sacrifices that were performed /597/ in the territory prior to our occupation, and a few words on circumcision as well.

782 766 "Human sacrifices," says Marc., p. 156, "definitely took place among the Mossi up to the time when we occupied the territory. Whenever a Moro Naba died at Ouagadougou, one of his wives and one of his horses were sent to Gambaga in order to be sacrificed on the tomb of Ouidiraogo (?) who is regarded as the mother of the first Moro Naba. Soon after the occupation of Ouagadougou by the French, 782 754 the dethroned Moro Naba, Boukary Koutou, ordered the sacrifice of a black rooster, a black goat, a black donkey, a black beef, and a black slave on one of the mountains overlooking the White Volta. This, it seems, was bound to cause the immediate death of the new Moro Naba enthroned by Voulet."

304 As for circumcision, the Mossi circumcise boys and excise girls. Boys are circumcised when they are from eight to twelve years old, and thirty or forty of them are circumcised at one time. The

643 763 [645] [793] the Tansoba, the members of the royal sub-lineage, and the district chiefs. The Tengsoba of the Ouagadougou area was also notified. Because he was a descendant of the aboriginal Ninisi population that "owned" the land, he supervised the burial ceremony.

[701] The Mogho Naba's death was kept secret, and no mourning was allowed until the Crown Prince had arrived at the capital and the Tansoba had recruited an army to protect the realm against would-be usurpers of power. Then the cry was raised in the palace, to reverberate throughout the land, 643 764 669 that "the fire had gone out." Once the ruler's death had been announced, the country was plunged into an interregnum, which was characterized by ritual and often by actual anarchy. The people in the towns immediately looted the markets and stole their neighbors' goods; the prisoners and captives in stocks were released by their guards; the nakomse in all the territories, districts, and villages subjected the local populations to robbery and pillage; and the members of the monarch's babissi began their intrigues for power. The traditional sanction for this anarchy was that only when people suffer during the breakdown of political control do they really appreciate the sovereign's role. The Mossi declare (with some truth) that no one was safe during the interregnum. However, as we shall see, the ruler was symbolically kept alive, and the country was never without effective political leadership.

766 644 643 When the Tengsoba arrived at the palace, he was joined by five hereditary funeral chiefs: the Pazany'tengsoba, the Tampouy Naba, the Benghin Naba, the Toghin Naba, and the Tanghin Naba. In the ceremony that followed, he gave permission for the royal grave to be dug. Meanwhile, the ruler's body was prepared for burial in the traditional manner by his female relatives and laid in state in the zongo. These women kept vigil over the body, shouting and weeping. Only the five ministers of the realm and the male members of the ruler's babissi were allowed to pay homage to the corpse within the zongo. All other mourners had to pay their respects to the monarch's eldest daughter, who, as Napoko, was dressed in the dead sovereign's clothes and sat in his place before the zongo. As her father's symbolic representative, she held daily court and received greetings and homage from all visitors until a new ruler was chosen. The drummer who sat by her side declared to all visitors, "You say that the Mogho Naba is dead! Well, who is that sitting there? Tell me! Is that not the Mogho Naba?"

766 643 [782] The ruler was buried the day after he died, at the end of an elaborate ceremony. Libations were poured out to the ancient rulers, and sacrifices made to them. All the important officials and members of the royal mini-

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mal lineage segment except the pretenders to the throne shaved their heads as a sign of mourning. The royal pretenders donned sheepskin mantles to signify that they were willing to "eat the nam." Once the ruler had been buried, the country settled down to an uneasy peace until the eighth day, when the funeral ceremonies took place. In the meantime, the Napoko symbolically held daily court, and the Tansoba's army acted as a check against the attempts of ambitious princes to seize power by force of arms.

Two days before the funeral, the Kamsaogho Naba selected the Kourita, who was to replace the Napoko as the living symbolic representative of the dead Mogho Naba. The person chosen to be Kourita was usually a young son of the deceased king, but since this person was banished from the capital, most of the royal wives hid their young children or fled the palace with them.[23] Once the Kourita had been chosen, the Kamsaogho Naba performed a ceremony (similar to those connected with the divine kings of the Near East) during which the youth was given one of his father's horses, dressed in his father's clothes, and given his father's youngest widow as a wife. He was then paid the homage due the Mogho Naba, and after receiving many gifts from the dignitaries, he was banished from Ouagadougou forever. As he went through the country, he was treated like the Mogho Naba and given many wives and presents. If he should chance to return to Ouagadougou or see the new Mogho Naba, either or both of them would be killed by the ancestors. Many Mossi districts seem to have been founded by exiled Kouritadamba. These men were undoubtedly among the numerous "elder" sons of past kings who are said to have "refused" the nam and gone to live in the districts now governed by their descendants.

The choice and banishment of the Kourita heralded the funeral rites, which were characterized by numerous animal sacrifices to the ancestors in the name of the deceased ruler. On the afternoon of the first day of the funeral, the Crown Prince mounted a horse and left the palace by the women's door. The Napoko then took the bridle of her brother's horse and led him and an immense crowd of cavalry, armed warriors, and musicians around the palace walls three times. After the third round, the Napoko demanded that her brother give her a personal servant as a present; he hesitated, but finally granted her request. The Napoko was then lifted up by the warriors, who shouted as they carried her home. The funeral thus came to an end.

All Mossi potentates tried to emulate the Mogho Naba of Ouagadougou in matters of pomp, ceremony, and government.[24] Their courts were inferior to his, but only because they were less powerful and less wealthy.

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634 The Kombere Naba, as the person who had "eaten the nam" of the district, was infused with some of the power and authority of the Mogho Naba and had the right to use force to maintain this power and authority. He was [576] respected, and people uncovered their heads and removed their slippers in his presence. Unlike the Mogho Naba, the Kombere Naba was permitted to eat with his peers. But whenever he drank the musicians made a roar-like sound with their instruments, and when he sneezed his attendants clapped. These rituals were rigidly adhered to because the Kombere Naba was readily accessible to the populace and might easily have lost their respect if he behaved in an undignified manner. He emphasized his social distance from them by never visiting the market place, and he did not go anywhere without a large entourage.

The Kombere Naba performed ceremonies and duties that were similar to but simpler than those of the Mogho Naba, and he was surrounded by officers bearing the same titles as those in the capital. But, as will be shown later, these officials had fewer and sometimes different duties than the courtiers at Ouagadougou. Some district chiefs had as many pages and wives as the Mogho Naba, but this was as much a result of their own desires as of their popularity with the local people. The death and funeral rites of a [766] district chief were not as elaborate as those of a Mogho Naba. They included [788] the circumambulation of the chief's compound by the principal heir and heiress, the symbolic reign of the Napoko, and the banishment of the Kourita.[41]

634 Every district chief, whether a Mogho Naba's vassal or a Dim's subordi-778 nate, was empowered to bestow the nam on his own subordinates. These [622] might be other district chiefs; but most often they were village chiefs. The circumstances under which a Kombere Naba received the authority to grant the nam to another Kombere Naba were usually complex and sprang from rebellions and dynastic changes. Once granted, this authority was seldom revoked, but the district chief had to report to his immediate superior, a Mogho Naba or Dim, whenever he wished to confer the nam upon another district chief.

634 In some cases the Mogho Naba invested a district chief himself, and 175 afterward placed him under the control of a neighboring district chief. For 669 example, the chiefs of two districts, Vooko and Nobila, were always installed 778 by the Mogho Naba of Ouagadougou, but were supervised by the Nobere district chief. This practice dates back to the civil war involving Mogho Naba Sagha I (ca. 1787–1803), in which chiefs of Vooko and Nobere sided with the loser. The Mogho Naba executed the local rebels and placed one of his sons in Nobere. He then divided Vooko into two districts, placing a younger son in the one he called Nobila (little Nobere) and subjecting him

found to have been justified—that is, if the victim was a thief or a nocturnal intruder—then the accused was acquitted or simply fined. If, however, the accused was found guilty of murder, he was sentenced to die, and the mode of execution was at the chief's pleasure. The chief surrendered the prisoner to his executioners, serfs who lived in the Baglere ward. They took him into the woods and carried out the sentence by strangulation, hanging, decapitation, clubbing, or stoning.

The perpetrator of an unusually heinous crime was often ordered to kill himself with a poisoned arrow. This form of execution was feared most, because it tested the murderer's mettle and called into play the coercive force of his lineage if he proved to be a coward. When such an execution was ordered, the district chief had a poisoned arrow prepared and brought to the murderer's father, his brother, or his father's brother's son. The relative gave the arrow to the condemned man, and, while apologizing for his painful mission, explained that the crime had to be expiated. If the murderer agreed to kill himself, his relatives prepared food and drink for him while his grave was dug. Some proud and brave men helped their relatives dig the oblong-shaped grave required for a murderer; some even insisted on digging it themselves. When both the food and the grave had been prepared, the murderer bade his relatives farewell, took the food and the poisoned arrow, and went into a hut. Here he ate the food and afterward killed himself by pushing the poisoned arrow into his leg. In some cases he had to be provided with a second arrow to hasten his death. If a cowardly murderer refused to kill himself, one of his relatives offered to die in his stead. He told the murderer that death was preferable to the knowledge that his lineage brother was a coward. What would happen, he asked the murderer, if he saw a relative being harmed? Would he choose his own safety rather than run the risk of death? The other relatives asked the same questions, and this subtle coercion was usually sufficient to induce the most cowardly man to kill himself. There are no reports of a murderer's permitting a relative to die for him; life would have been impossible for him afterward. One suspects that if ever a murderer had attempted to elude his fate, the district chief would have had him executed.

The district court also prescribed capital punishment for individuals convicted of arson, abduction, witchcraft, or lese majesty. A person convicted of willfully setting fire to someone's hut or crops was put to death even if no one was killed in the resulting fire; he was held to have jeopardized the life and livelihood of his victims. Similarly, the rare person convicted of threatening the well-being of others through the practice of witchcraft was usually tortured and killed. Conviction usually followed the testimony of witnesses or the confession of the accused.

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according to the Mossi, the imminent death of an important chief; secondly, a meteor had passed unexpectedly over Ouagadougou between 8 and 9 P.M. [on March 12th], vividly impressing the Mogho Naba himself.

It is quite possible that the emotions induced by these phenomena aggravated the heart condition that felled him. Certain people have maintained that the Mogho Naba, being opposed to all foreign domination and convinced that serious developments were imminent, voluntarily commited suicide by poison in order to elude them. So far, there is no proof that such a rumor has really been adrift. The matter is under strict investigation.[80]

The Mossi people practiced as best they could the traditional rituals connected with the death of a Mogho Naba. During the interregnum, however, the administration did not permit the usual chaos, ritual or otherwise. One administration report states: "Young people tried to steal things in the market, taking advantage of the old customs, but they were checked."[81] A later report adds that the traditions of the Napoko and the Kourita were honored, and that one hundred persons were arrested for the ritual larceny of small objects.

The traditional Mossi authorities allegedly requested that the deceased Mogho Naba, as one who had worn the Legion of Honor, be given full military honors. This required the placing of his body in a coffin so that the funeral cortege could move through the streets, a fact which introduced a new ritual element in royal funerals. Once this ceremony was over, however, the representatives of the administration withdrew, and the body was buried according to customary rites.

The traditional electoral college then proceeded with the task of choosing a new ruler. The choice was between Issoufou Congo, Kom's eldest son, who was then a lieutenant in the French Colonial Army in the Ivory Coast, and his younger brother, Etienne Congo, chief of the Doulougou district. With the administration's permission, the college elected Issoufou Congo. He took the title "Sagha" (the second Mogho Naba to bear that name), and was installed with traditional ceremonies.

The message Sagha sent to the French High Commissioner bears quoting. Like the traditional speeches of newly elected Mogho Nanamse, it was believed by the Mossi people to contain subtle jibes at enemies, praises to benefactors and friends, and portents of future plans. The Mogho Naba said:

> At the moment when I take command of the Mossi people, I must thank you for having placed me on the throne of my father. I give you assurance of my fidelity toward France in all circumstances. Be assured by this testimony that my father will remain for me an honored person and a guide. I will walk in the footsteps of my father. In these difficult times, my people and I re-

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The Mogho Naba's daughter, the Napoko, impersonates her deceased father at his funeral ceremonies. Note that she wears one of his robes, his slippers, and his bonnet, and has his sword behind her.

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Mogho Naba Sagha II (1942-57), who was instrumental in reuniting the Mossi people into one territory, the Upper Volta.

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When one asks the Mossi directly, "What is a market?" the response to this question is: "A market is a place where people meet to buy and sell. People travel from one market place to another market place, and on the way they stop and see their friends in other villages. In the market one often meets and drinks with one's friends. People also go to distant markets to find things which they do not grow themselves or which cannot be found in their own markets."

Lending support to the Mossi contention that markets are places where one goes to buy and sell is the fact that most important markets in their country are found at the intersections of well-traveled routes. These intersections are often the places where chiefs have their capitals or compounds and this leads to the further idea that there is a connection between chiefs and markets, if only because the power of the chiefs makes markets possible. This does not mean, however, that the market is a purely physical entity which can only exist under the aegis of a chief, or that it is a purely economic institution. First of all, some markets, especially the smaller ones, are moved periodically without too much difficulty. Secondly, and of great importance, is the fact that whenever and wherever there is a large gathering of Mossi there is a "market." Indeed one can say that Mossi seldom come together in large numbers without coming to a market, or without creating one. It appears that the Mossi cannot interact with one another in any circumstance without also exchanging goods of some kind. For example, when a pagan chief holds the annual festival to his ancestors, the people who attend form a market in the vicinity of his compound. In those districts where the chiefs have become Christians and celebrate their birthdays rather than the traditional ancestors' rites, the people go to pay them homage and also "make a market." Similarly, whenever there is a funeral of an important chief, the people from the surrounding villages or even districts bring commodities to his hamlet and hold a market during the ceremony. On Christmas day, 1955, the people of Manga district "moved their market" about 500 yards to the Catholic Mission grounds where the Christians were celebrating their holiday. And after celebrating the prayers of Ramadan, the Moslems and their pagan townsmen repair to the markets to spend the rest of the day.

Most Mossi markets are inaugurated with religious ceremonies except those which develop by accretion—that is, by more and more persons coming voluntarily to trade. When a chief orders that a market be created or when a market is moved from one place to another place for any reason, the chief is the person who gives the order for the ceremony to be performed. First of all he speaks to his Raga Naba (market chief), usually a non-Mossi slave, about the need for the market or the desirability of changing its location. This man then consults a *teng-*

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the noble class, whose actions embody the ideology that the exercise of sovereignty is a corporate right which reverts to all of them when the head ruler dies. Much of this raiding is symbolic and does not interrupt market activities.

Many of the ceremonies connected with the funeral of chiefs and respected deceased elders take place in the market. Sometime between the interment of the dead person, the *keema,* and the first burial ceremonies, the sister-in-law *(dakia)* of the dead man in her role as joking relative—a role she plays until the funeral ceremonies are completed—impersonates him in the market place. On the day chosen for this rite the *dakia* dresses in the clothes of the *keema* and goes to market. While there, she acts as she observed her brother-in-law to have acted in the past: she circles the market and buys goods; she buys beer from his favorite beer seller and drinks with his friends; and for a moment, at least, she sits with his old cronies in their favorite haunts and takes part in their discussions. She may even be serenaded by *griots* who sing praises in honor of "her" ancestors, and she rewards them before leaving the market place that evening.

The market is the scene of an important ritual during the final funeral ceremonies, which are held about one year after a man was buried. On the morning of this ceremony the female relatives of the *keema,* led by his eldest daughter and his *dakia,* appear in the market and go from stall to stall buying all the things the deceased used in his lifetime. These include meat, *zumbala* (locust bean balls), cotton, tobacco, salt, kola nuts, peppers, *kumba* (a tomato), cakes, cooked millet-mush balls, potatoes, etc. When they have gathered all of these things, they retire to a spot near the market where they lay out all the foodstuff in baskets. In the meantime, the drummers play the royal airs, if the dead man was a chief, or ordinary rhythms if he was a commoner. Then the *keema's* eldest daughter places a basket on her head and, accompanied by four men, leads a procession of drummers and of the other women, also with their baskets, around the market. While this procession is circling the market three times in honor of the deceased, the *dakia,* carrying a very old basket containing the stalest food she could find, weaves back and forth through the marching throng making a nuisance of herself. After the third round the marchers return to their assembly point whence the eldest daughter and some of the older women now rush into the market, stealing merchandise from the stalls and placing it in their baskets. This assault is often so quickly done that it is fairly successful. The raiders then join the other mourners at the assembly point, where with bowed heads they listen respectfully while the chief drummer recites the genealogy of the *keema* and tells him that the people from the surrounding villages